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# SCIENCE

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## CONTENTS

<i>The Physics Teacher's Problem</i> : PROFESSOR C. R. MANN .....	951
<i>Albert B. Porter</i> : PROFESSOR HENRY CREW ..	962
<i>Banquet in Honor of Professor Bessey</i> .....	963
<i>British Association Trip to Alaska</i> .....	964
<i>The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the George Washington University</i> .....	964
<i>Scientific Notes and News</i> .....	965
<i>University and Educational News</i> .....	969
<i>Discussion and Correspondence</i> :—	
<i>Minimal Quantities of Preservatives</i> : PROFESSOR J. F. SNELL. <i>The Chalk Formations of Northeast Texas</i> : DR. ROBT. T. HILL. <i>The Daylight Saving Bill</i> : T. C. M. Library Book-stacks without Daylight: DR. W. W. KEEN .....	970
<i>Scientific Books</i> :—	
<i>Recent Mathematical Books</i> : PROFESSOR C. J. KEYSER. <i>Gilman's Hopi Songs</i> : ALICE C. FLETCHER .....	974
<i>Special Articles</i> :—	
<i>The Dorsal Spines of Chameleo cristatus Stuck</i> : PROFESSOR E. C. CASE. <i>On the Chemistry and the Development of the Yolk Platelets in the Egg of the Frog</i> : DR. J. F. McCLENDON. <i>The Structure of Lily Pistils</i> : CHARLES E. TEMPLE .....	979
<i>Societies and Academies</i> :—	
<i>The Iowa Academy of Science</i> : L. S. ROSS. <i>The Torrey Botanical Club</i> : PERCY WILSON .....	980

## THE PHYSICS TEACHER'S PROBLEM<sup>1</sup>

THAT physical science is constantly rendering most magnificent service to human life was never more dramatically demonstrated than on the occasion of the recent wreck of the steamship *Republic*. That a ship, disabled and hidden in a dense fog, was yet able to summon to its aid another ship a hundred miles away by an inaudible, invisible, yet infallible means of communication, thereby saving many hundred lives, is a feat that would have been pronounced impossible by our grandfathers if not by ourselves but a few years ago. Had Mr. Binns, the operator of the wireless telegraph on the *Republic*, lived near Boston about two hundred and twenty years ago, he would surely have been burned for witchcraft.

So thick and fast have come such contributions of science to our commercial and economic life, that most people now take them as a matter of course. A telephone is at present almost as much of a household necessity as a kitchen stove. The steam engine and the electric motor, since by their aid ten men can do the work of one hundred, are increasing our potential manufacturing population at a rate that must satisfy even President Roosevelt that we are in no immediate danger of dying out as a nation. Musicians are being replaced by arc lights, or by pianolas; and even teachers are being compelled to yield their divine calling to graphophones in the "teaching" of foreign languages. Are we then surprised that this is called a scientific age? Do we wonder that scientists are

MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to the Editor of SCIENCE, Garrison-on-Hudson, N. Y.

<sup>1</sup>Address delivered at the Fourth Annual Conference of the Schools of Vermont with the University of Vermont, March 12, 1909.